

School Curriculum, Assessment, and Accountability Council Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2001
State Board Room
Capital Plaza Tower, Frankfort Kentucky

Committee Members:

Jamie Bowling	Gary Meilcarek	Dr. H. M. Snodgrass
Dale Campbell	Eleanor Mills	Nancy Sutton
Kay Freeland	Henry Ormsby	Roxie R. Tempus
Suzanne Guyer	Roger Pankratz	J. Maynard Thomas,
Varetta D. Hunt	Robert Sexton	Vice Chairman
Benny Lile, Chairman	Linda Sheffield, Ph.D.	

Presenters:

Linda Frazer, Office of Assessment and Accountability, Kentucky Department of Education
Cindy Owen, Office of Assessment and Accountability, Kentucky Department of Education
Scott Trimble, Office of Assessment and Accountability, Kentucky Department of Education

In Attendance:

Kentucky State Board of Education: Helen Montjoy
Kentucky Department of Education: Roger Ervin, Brenda Withrow
Legislative Research Commission, Office of Education Accountability: Gerald Lunney

Call to Order

Benny Lile

Chairperson Benny Lile called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. EDT.

Roll Call

Roger Ervin

The membership roll was called with the following members present:

Suzanne Guyer
Delores V. Hunt
Benny Lile
Gary Meilcarek

Eleanor Mills
Henry Ormsby
Robert Sexton
Linda Sheffield

Dr. H. M. Snodgrass
Nancy Sutton
Maynard Thomas

Agenda Item

• Draft minutes from January 31, 2001 Meeting Benny Lile

The committee members reviewed the minutes from the January 2001 meeting. Committee Members asked that all minutes reflect names of presenters and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) in attendance. Henry Ormsby made the motion to approve the January minutes with the understanding that future minutes shall include names of presenters and KDE attending staff. The motion was seconded by Dr. H. M. Snodgrass. The Committee voted and the motion passed without opposition.

Agenda Item

• Results of Step 5: Synthesis Scott Trimble/Cindy Owen

Presentation Overview:

The committee is being brought up-to-date on Standard Setting activities since the January SCAAC meeting. The committee will see the presentation that KDE staff shared with the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). The committee will be briefed on Standard Setting actions by KBE at the April 30/May 1 special meeting and anticipated activities at June 5/6 KBE regular meeting. The State Board chair and KDE staff will answer committee member questions.

KDE:

There are two types of standards, content standards and performance level standards. Content standards identify what students should know. Content Standards, which are not changing, are found in the *Core Content for Assessment*. Performance level standards are comprised of performance level descriptions and cut-scores (points) and define how well students know the subjects. Performance level descriptions are text describing student level performance at the Novice, Apprentice, Proficient, and Distinguished (NAPD) levels in each content area (Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arts and

Humanities, Practical Living / Vocational Studies) at grades 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11. The performance level descriptors define NAPD to focus instruction and assessment and will guide teachers' work and communicate how well students have to perform. The descriptors might create communications between, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and post-secondary education and improve instructional practices.

The KIRIS standard setting used a modified Angoff method using teachers' professional judgment. In 1992 standards were set for reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and writing. Six (6) teachers per content area across all grades based their standards on tests having three (3) open-response items per content area and one (1) writing sample. In 1993 standards were set for arts and humanities and practical living / vocational studies. Six (6) teachers per content area across all grades measured these areas through items in other content areas. The NAPD descriptors for KIRIS were described.

The reasons for setting new standards are:

- Multiple choice items and norm referenced test components are added at all levels.
- The lengths of test components changed.
- The Core Content was revised, resulting in changes in test content.
- Some test questions were eliminated or revised.
- The method for equating tests across biennia was revised.
- The accountability system was changed.
- Need to revisit standards periodically.

The standard setting process consisted of developing draft performance level descriptors, applying three standards setting procedures, synthesis of three recommendations, and acceptance by the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). The time lines for re-establishing performance standards were:

1. Draft student performance level descriptors (December 1999 / January 2000) {88 teachers}.
2. Contracting Groups standard-setting procedure (April 2000) {960 teachers}.
3. Jaeger-Mills standard-setting procedure (October 2000) {311 teachers}.
4. CTB Bookmark standard setting (December 2000) {292 teachers}.
5. Synthesis of Steps 2, 3, 4, and Board recommendation (February 2001) {133 teachers}.
6. KDE consideration and final approval (May / June 2001).

Each standard setting method had a specific focus. Using the same draft descriptors developed in Step 1, teachers in Contracting Groups focused on students' classroom performance, teachers in Jaeger-Mills focused on student work on the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT), and CTB Bookmark teachers focused on KCCT test items. The draft descriptors established a common beginning for each method and provided a common view of proficient allowed the synthesis of three sets of cut-score recommendations. The draft descriptors may need to be refined to assure congruence

between descriptors and the actual assessment (after cut-scores are finalized). The descriptors will help teachers align instruction with the assessment.

The Contrasting Groups standard setting used classroom performance of student and professional judgment of their teachers. Teachers categorized the classroom performance of students using the draft descriptors. The NAPD cut-scores were derived by setting the borderlines for Novice/Apprentice, Apprentice/Proficient, Proficient/Distinguished.

Jaeger-Mills used actual student work in a content area from the spring 2000 administration of KCCT. The teachers categorized the student work by novice low, novice medium, novice high, apprentice low, apprentice medium, apprentice high, proficient low, proficient medium, proficient high, distinguished low, distinguished medium, and distinguished high. The teachers, as part of the process, edited the draft descriptors.

The CTB Bookmark used Spring 2000 KCCT assessment items with student responses ordered by difficulty. Teachers used the draft descriptors as a beginning point and recommended cut-scores by reviewing ordered items with student responses. Teachers placed a bookmark at the place in the ordered book where apprentice student work began, proficient student work began and distinguished student work began.

The standard setting project is unique in that it used three different methods to recommend standards. All three methods were well implemented and consistent with the design. The Synthesis Step brought back 133 teachers who participated in one of the three standard setting methods to recommend 3 cut scores in each content area. The teachers did NOT average results from the procedures to best differentiate between novice, apprentice, proficient, and distinguished. Three committees were formed for each content area by elementary, middle and high school resulting in 18 committees. The content/grade committees reviewed instructional consequences of cut-scores recommended from each procedure and based on instructional considerations, formed a initial recommendation. Then the committees were formed into three committees, elementary, middle and high school. The teachers discussed across the curriculum, instructional rationale rational for recommendations and impact on the percent of students at NAPD. The teachers then re-convened into the 18 content/grade committees to reconsider the recommendations. Then the teachers were formed into 6 content specific committees (reading, mathematics, science, social studies, arts & humanities, and practical living/vocational studies) where they again discussed across the curriculum, instructional rationale for recommendations and impact on the percent of students at NAPD. The teachers then reconvened into the 18 content/grade committees to consider recommendations and then made their final recommendations to be submitted to KBE.

The committee was presented with information on student raw scores, scale scores and cut-scores/cut-points. Raw scores for reading, mathematics, science, and social studies permit a maximum raw score of 72 for each content area. Students respond to 6 open response questions and 24 multiple choice questions. Each open response question has a maximum score of 4 and correct multiple choice question is 1. Open response questions

count twice. Raw scores are converted to scale scores to address the minor differences in difficulty among the six forms of the test. Raw scores (0 to 72) by content area and form are converted to a scale score that has a range of 325 to 800.

SCAAC:

Committee members commended the board and KDE staff for an excellent effort. A committee member asked that Education schools at Kentucky Universities receive training materials and order item books. Members discussed the appearance of manipulating data and the implications of changing of Spring 1999 and Spring 2000 student scores which already include the new weighting of Novice (non-performance, medium and high) and Apprentice (low, medium, and high).

KBE:

The State Board has conveyed to KDE and the contractor that test questions will permit students to demonstrate distinguished work. The scoring guide is much like the new descriptors. The descriptors will permit better test items and better scoring. The State Board's desire is to have proficient students and for everyone to know what a proficient student is. NTAPAA says we are setting standards and not resetting standards. The Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) is a new test and a new system. Standard setting, cut-points, and setting of scale scores are standard operating procedure by all test publishers. Teachers at the Educational Assessment and Accountability Subcommittee (EAARS) hearing described the standard setting process to the legislative members. The cut-score distributions were not shared with teachers at the Synthesis session (Step 5) until the end. Teachers did not fudge numbers as KDE staff did not provide numbers until the very end.

KDE:

The descriptors are close enough to the scoring guide such that Spring 1999, Spring 2000 and Spring 2001 scores are the same. When KBE accepts the standard setting recommendations (on June KBE meeting agenda), Spring 1999 and Spring 2000 results will be recomputed using the new cut-points. The new baselines for Long Term Accountability will then be sent to the schools in the August time period. The new baselines will apply to this years test and will be reported on September 15th.

SCAAC:

Committee members reviewed the numbers and drew some conclusions. These were:

- ✓ Mathematics and Science results under Step 5 recommendations now in line. Under KIRIS Mathematics and Science seemed out of sync in performance with other content areas.
- ✓ We are only half way to our goal in only two areas: science elementary and reading middle school. This clearly indicates teachers did not fudge the numbers.

KBE/KDE:

KDE is appreciative of the 1600+ teachers who have spent over 25,000 hours in the standard setting effort. A survey on the KDE WEB site was conducted to allow input from teachers and the public on the descriptors. The results of the survey are running 5 to 1 in favor of the performance descriptors and the process.

SCAAC:

Committee members discussed what options the members have in making a motion. The options are:

1. Adopt the recommendations of staff.
2. Ask to intervene in setting of cut-points and redefining of descriptors. The committee will make revisions to the descriptors and ask that KDE staff determine the impact to the cut-points.
3. Throw all work to date out and start over.

The committee wants students doing proficient work and by accepting the staff recommendations, the committee is affirming that the descriptors reflect this. The outcome of the standard setting process is that this is the recommendation of Kentucky teachers and the process has been positively received by NTAPAA and the Educational Assessment and Accountability Subcommittee (EAARS).

Nancy Sutton made the motion to “accept the recommendation as presented by staff of the standard setting process”. The motion was seconded by Henry Ormsby. The Committee voted and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item

• Next Meeting: Need to Schedule

Benny Lile

Committee members discussed future meeting dates. It was agreed that the next meeting date is September 10, 2001. At that time committee members will set dates for the remainder of the year. Members are to telephone or e-mail the committee chair with dates of availability.

Agenda Item

· Writing On-demand Policy

Scott Trimble

Presentation Overview:

The committee members reviewed a letter from the Kentucky Association of Assessment Coordinators (KAAC) addressing on-demand writing. The letter was distributed to members at the January 31, 2001 meeting.

KDE:

The on-demand writing prompt is scored to the same standard as the writing portfolio. Students average 90 minutes to 2 hours to write a response to the on-demand prompt. Writing consultants were brought together and they feel that there should be one set of standards for on-demand writing and the writing portfolio. KAAC is requesting that the on-demand writing performance weighting for apprentice be increased from 60 to 80. The National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA) plans to discuss the letter at their June 2001 meeting.

SCAAC:

Committee members discussed the score differences in schools between on-demand writing and writing portfolio. The score differences deal with time spent developing the writing pieces. While the committee is only being asked to look at a shift in the weighting of apprentice (KAAC does not want to request a major scoring shift for on-demand writing), should this committee also look at proficient and distinguished. Are the scores influenced by teachers scoring the writing portfolio and the contractor scoring on-demand writing?

KBE/KDE:

Scoring of two different documents is not a scoring/psychometrics issue. It's more a curriculum instructional issue. Scoring should not be an issue as teachers have been trained. The change in weighting is a policy issue.

SCAAC:

The committee took no action and will await advise from NTAPAA.

Agenda Item

· Alternate calendar

Scott Trimble

Presentation Overview:

Twenty seven (27) school districts operate an alternate school calendar. Students have 8 weeks or fewer for a summer break. Approximately 75 to 100 other Kentucky school districts are on a modified calendar where students receive a week off in the fall. The Department of Education is asking SCAAC for input to the question "Should the assessment be administered differently for schools on an alternate calendar".

KDE:

Most Kentucky schools start the school year between August 7 and August 20th. Assuming a April 15th assessment date, there are 10 to 12 additional days of classroom instruction for students who start August 7th. KDE's policy is that everyday of classroom instruction is critical. This is not a single year /single grade problem. Schools housing grade 4 need to look at instruction time in the primary grades. If the testing window was adjusted to accommodate the additional 10 to 12 classroom days of instruction, the testing window would stretch to 4 weeks (maybe 5) to accommodate the alternate school calendars. Conversations with teachers, Kentucky Education Association (KEA), and educators in general feel that the assessment should not start immediately after Spring/Easter break. KEA has asked the legislature for exemptions to move their annual meeting thorough 2008 to not interfere with the testing window. Kentucky statute requires that assessment and accountability results are reported by September 15th. The contractor has advised KDE that a four week testing window does not permit them sufficient time to perform all of the required scoring, psychometric work, and reporting results to meet the September 15th deadline.

SCAAC:

The committee member who also represents schools on an alternate calendar has expressed to the legislature that there may be a need to shift reporting of results to September 30th. Committee members wanted to know if enrichment programs during the alternate school calendar breaks help the schools such that students, instruction wise, are on the same calendar as non-alternate calendar school. On the average, 30 percent of the students participate and most of the programs are for remediation and not enrichment.

KBE:

The Board, in conjunction with the commissioner, has asked that NTAPAA provide input on the Alternate Calendar issue.

SCAAC:

The committee took no action and will await advise from NTAPAA.

Agenda Item

· Core Content Review

Scott Trimble

Presentation Overview:

Update on Core Content Review.

KDE:

KDE staff provided an update on the content review schedule, the schedule for adoption of new instructional materials and its influence on the assessment. A content review should be handled about a year before new instruction materials are adopted. KBE has requested that NTAPAA review the issue and address any impact to instruction and assessment.

SCAAC:

The committee took no action since KBE has requested that NTAPAA review the issue. A committee member noted that the committee has not recently addressed curriculum in their discussions and feels that the committee should take a deeper look at curriculum. Everything has dealt with assessment and accountability.

KDE:

KDE staff will send a copy of the Core Content to committee members and arrange for Curriculum staff from the Office of Academic and Professional Development to attend the September SCAAC meeting to discuss curriculum.

Agenda Item

· New Web Pages and Contact Information

Linda Frazer

Presentation Overview:

SCAAC minutes and committee member list on WEB

KDE:

KDE staff are placing on the WEB committee approved SCAAC minutes and an update d SCAAC member list with contact information. KDE staff will e-mail the WEB location (URL) to committee members so they may view the pages.

New Agenda Item

• Agenda Items for September 10, 2001 Meeting Benny Lile

SCAAC members asked that the following are Agenda items for the March Meeting:

- ✓ Discussion on Student Accountability. The General Assembly is working on a plan that sets a timetable for Student Accountability. This committee should make a recommendation to the legislative sub-committee on student accountability since the committee has worked on this subject over the past two years. The legislature created this body, so SCAAC should communicate to the legislature. The committee asked that KDE staff put together a document for the September meeting showing status by state on student accountability.
- ✓ Longitudinal Model. Committee members asked for an update on the second year pilot of the Longitudinal Model. Forty five (45) schools participated in the Spring 2001 study. Committee members who school(s) participated shared a concern about administering the longitudinal test as it is hard to fit additional testing into the two week window. KDE staff will have some feedback for the September meeting. Full data results are not available until late October as the priority by the contractor is to meet the September 15th Commonwealth Accountability Testing System reporting deadline.
- ✓ Report on the Minority Student Achievement. Six districts have volunteered to be Kentucky's "Closing the Gap" laboratories. If possible, SCAAC members would like a presentation from two Superintendents and talk with a couple students who are participating in the program.

• Adjournment Benny Lile

Suzanne Guyer introduced the motion for adjournment and Eleanor Mills seconded the motion. The Committee voted at 2:35 p.m. to adjourn and the motion passed unanimously.